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AUTHOR Williams, Lynnda
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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the extent to which high school students are interested in their free-choice books and on the relationship between the students' reading level and the readability level of the chosen books, a study was devised to test the validity of Edward Fry's Readability Principle. This principle states that high motivation can overcome high readability, but low motivation demands low readability. Reading levels of the students were obtained from scores on standardized tests, and the Fry Readability Scale was used to calculate the readability of the books. The 58 students involved in the study selected a total of 75 books and completed 56 of them. Each of their selections constituted either a positive or a negative match. If the reading level of the student equalled or exceeded the readability of the book, the match was positive. If the reading level of the student was below the readability of the book, then the match was negative. There were 43 positive and 32 negative matches. In individual interviews, the students reported the number of pages they had read in each book and indicated their level of interest in each. It was found that students with high interest, in both positive and negative groups, read more pages than those with low interest. Little or no relationship was found between students' reading levels and readability levels. The study confirms the Fry Readability Principle. (FL)

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READING INTEREST IN FREE-CHOICE BOOKS, READABILITY, AND THE READABILITY PRINCIPLE

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

OF

RUTGERS

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

BY

LYNNDA WILLIAMS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY JANUARY, 1979

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ABSTRACT

The purpose and scope of this study began with a focus on the high school readers, to what extent they are interested in their free-choice books and the relationship between students' reading levels and readability scores of the self-selected books. The study's direction included determining the validity of the Fry Readability Principle, which stresses that high motivation can overcome high readability, but "low motivation demands low readability."

There were 58 students who chose 75 books in this study; 49 of these students completed 56 books. Each free-choice book selection constituted a "match"--which was designated either as positive or negative. If the reading level of the student paralleled or exceeded the readability of the book, the match was "positive"; if the reading level of the student fell below the readability of the book, then the match was "negative." The 58 students were interviewed as they returned their freely chosen books to their school library; they gave the researcher the total number of pages read and also gave an indication of their level of interest in the book they read. The scale, designed by the researcher, ranged from "not interested" to

"highly interested." Reading levels of the students were obtained from the scores the students received on the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, and the Fry Readability Scale was used to calculate readability.

There were 43 positive matches and 32 negative matches, with mean interest scores of the two groups nearly identical. The positive-match group read a mean of 21.6 pages more than the negative group. Students with high interest, in both positive and negative groups, read more pages and more books than students with low interest. In addition, little or no relationship was found between students' reading levels and readability scores in free-choice book selections. The mean readability of the books chosen by the positive group was 6.7, and the mean reading level of that group was 10.6. The mean readability of the negative-match group was 7.9 and their mean reading level was 5.6, indicating that the positive group read easier books than the negative group. This study confirms the importance of high interest in overcoming high readability (Fry's Readability Principle).

Several suggestions were made for further research; among them include: (a) determining a more precise measure of interest/motivation; (b) using varied student populations; (c) using another measure for amount of material read; and (d) measuring the time spent reading free-choice book selections by students.

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APPROVED:

Edward Fry

Harold W. Beder

Spencer Gibbins

ACTING DEAN:

Mary Bach Kievit

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In their attempts to motivate poor readers to read more, teachers assess the students' reading disability, determine individual reading levels through standardized testing and individual tests, and estimate the difficulty of the reading material by using a readability formula which gives an estimate of the grade level of the material. By matching the reading material with the abilities of the students, the teacher is reasonably sure of not providing materials "too difficult" or "too easy" for the students in his class. Believing that "easy" reading usually produces continued reading and heightens positive attitudes among poor readers, teachers, especially reading teachers, want to offer the "right" books for the "right" student. Depending on the formula used, a teacher can arrive at some estimate of book difficulty by measuring such variables as number of words, number of syllables, average sentence length, and words that do not appear on a word list which accompanies the formula. Readability formulae aid the reading or classroom teacher in the decision to guide a student in the reading program as he reads materials suited to his needs

and level. Such is the case in many individualized reading programs throughout the country.

The burden of obtaining reading materials suitable for each student rests upon the reading teacher or classroom instructor. It is often difficult to secure a book for reluctant readers which both motivates and adequately matches appropriate reading levels. The problem increases in the secondary schools, although publishing companies are now indicating readability levels, making it somewhat easier for the reading teacher. The author found that one reluctant reader, for example, declined to read or finish reading four different books (all selected by his teacher and determined to be at his reading level). His teacher continued to search diligently for suitable reading materials, but the answer to the problem lies, of course, with the student himself. "Choose a book that you think you'll like. Feel free to change your mind if you feel you've chosen a book that is too difficult for you or that you don't seem to enjoy." Such a directive to the student shifts the selection process from the teacher to the student. The teacher can still provide encouragement and offer suggestions, but the student is free to determine what is "suitable" for him.

The readability principle purports that ". . .high motivation overcomes high readability level, but low motivation demands a low readability level" (Fry, 1975, p. 847). Classroom practice would seem

to indicate this is true. Teachers have seen students read magazines and books with high readability knowing that the students themselves had poor reading skills for such "difficult" reading. Motivation as a function of interest and the self-selection of materials play an important role in learning and reading.

Statement of the Problem

Does high motivation overcome high readability? The present study attempts to verify the readability principle by observing students who have self-selected materials and have attempted to read part or all of them. The students' reading levels and the readability of the selected books will constitute either a positive or negative match. As the hypotheses were being developed for the study, criteria for the "positive" matches and "negative" matches (between the student's reading level, as measured by a standardized test, and the readability score of his self-selected book) were also set. If a student chooses a book which, when the Fry readability formula is applied, parallels or falls below his standardized reading level score, then the match will be viewed as a positive one. If a student chooses a book which has a readability score above his reading level, then the match will be viewed as a negative one.

High interest and low interest group criteria were also developed as the researcher designed an instrument for recording the student's

interest level. A 5-point scale (1 = no interest, 5 = high interest) will be used in an interview situation with each student. Those reporting "very interested" or "highly interested" in their reading will be categorized in the high-interest group, while those reporting "not interested" or "slightly interested" will be categorized in the low-interest group. The middle group, reporting simply "interested," will be discounted.

In analyzing each instance or case of positive or negative matches, motivation and interest of the students become a key factor. In our attempts to investigate the problem, the following specific questions are raised:

1. Does interest affect the amount of material read?
2. Do students choose books at their own reading level?
3. Are students who have positive matches (between reading level and readability) more interested (as determined by self-reporting interest inventory) than those who have negative matches?
4. Will greater amounts of reading occur with positive matches than with negative matches?
5. When the reading level and readability of self-selected book negatively match, does interest affect the amount read?
6. When reading level and readability of self-selected book positively match, does a greater amount of reading take place?

Statement of Hypotheses

Given these questions, the following hypotheses are presented:

H_1 Students with high interest as indicated by a self-reporting interest inventory will have statistically significant higher

mean scores of the number of pages read and percent of book read than students with low interest.

H_2 There will be a positive correlation between readability of books selected and students' scores on the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

H_3 There will be a statistically significant difference between interest scores of students who have a negative match in reading level and readability and students who have a positive match.

H_4 When positive matches do occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference in the mean number of pages read and the percent of book read than when negative matches occur.

H_5 When negative matches occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference between the mean number of pages and percent of book read by high interest students and the mean number of pages read and percent of book read by low interest students.

H_6 When positive matches occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference between mean number of pages read and percent of book read by high interest students and mean number of pages read and percent of book read by low interest students.

Definition of Terms

Readability score or level refers to the grade score obtained as a result of hand-counted applications of the Fry Readability Formula (five 100-word samples to be used instead of the recommended three).

A negative match occurs when a student's reading level grade-placement score falls below the readability of the self-selected book.

A positive match occurs when a student's reading level parallels the readability of the self-selected book or is higher than the readability of the book.

Instances refers to each instance of book selection without regard to whether or not the student has been interviewed previously or whether or not he completed his reading.

Cases refers to the students themselves.

Reading level or score refers to the student's comprehension grade-placement score on the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS). The most recent reading level score will be used.

High interest will be noted when a student indicates the numbers 4 or 5 (4 = very interested, 5 = highly interested) on a researcher-designed interest inventory scale from 1 to 5.

Low interest will be noted when a student indicates the numbers 1 or 2 (1 = not interested, 2 = slightly interested) on a researcher-designed interest inventory scale.

Motivation is used in certain applications and is understood to encompass degrees of interest and purposefulness in reading.

Limitations of the Study

The validity of the interest inventory scale, a scale designed by the researcher, is questionable because of its subjective reporting by the student and its subsequent interpretation by the researcher.

The timing of the interest interview is another consideration: Should interest be reported before or after the reading of a book? The definition of interest is also a limitation since "high" interest and "low" interest may vary, depending upon the experiment or situation. Interest is a subjective measure which is difficult to ascertain by objective criteria.

Another limitation is the criteria used to determine the positive and negative match categories. The data will yield varying results depending upon how one wishes to categorize "positive" and "negative." Since the reading level of any student on a given test is merely indicative of the range of scores possible and is not a "true" score, this fact also presents limitations. The same reasoning can also be applied to the readability estimate.

The population sample is restrictive in that the 58 students represented in this study are from a suburban area in which the socio-economic level is rather high and uniform; the data indeed may reflect this.

Overview of the Study

The study itself raises issues related to readability and its use in the classroom for students who are both readers and non-readers. The self-selected materials as opposed to teacher-assigned or selected materials necessitate a look at high and low interest in students as indicators of motivation and purpose in the reading process.

Readability is a crucial factor, and the following chapter will focus on readability as a whole in relation to student interest and motivation. The value of readability in relation to the student's reading level/ interest is an essential consideration in the review of the literature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

While a number of articles in the past decade have been published on readability, the various readability formulae, and how to use and interpret them (Fry, 1975, 1977; Harris, 1974; Klare, 1963, 1976), few investigators have confined their studies to readability in relationship to high/low motivation of students. The significance of the readability score and the needs and interests of the pupil are constantly under evaluation and analysis by reading and classroom teachers as attempts are made to stimulate reading growth and enjoyment. In our discussion of readability, the issue of high readability, reading selections, and pupil motivation becomes a focal point. However, the literature seems to be lacking in this particular area.

Readability: An Estimate of Difficulty

There are some things we do know about readability, its reliability and its relationship to students' performance. If we use different formulae to estimate the readability of a particular novel, differing scores will be obtained. In addition, readability formulae do not measure the difficulty of concepts or interest by the student in the

materials, both of which affect difficulty of material and, consequently, the reading choices of both students and teachers (Harris, 1975). Even though readability formulae have such limitations, they can be useful to the teacher as she assists students in their selections of books in accordance with their reading abilities (Harris, 1974). However, as recent as 1975, Arnold and Sherry found that "little or no accommodation for disabled readers is taking place in the school classroom." Their data, from the Purdue University Reading Clinic files, showed that the discrepancy between a child's instructional level and readability of assigned textbooks in social studies and English increases as he advances through grade school.

The point comes to mind that these problems might be minimized in individualized reading or instructional programs, especially if reader motivation or interest becomes a key factor in book selection rather than relying solely on the teacher's judgment. It has been pointed out that students will, if interest and motivation are high, read books that the reading teacher has previously judged "too difficult" (Fry, 1975). The Fry Readability Principle purports that "high motivation overcomes high readability level, but low motivation demands low readability level" (Fry, 1975, p. 847). In addition, Fry indicates that a child's interest level tends to follow chronological age levels and is not related to reading ability. At parental conferences, the researcher has observed

that parents are concerned with their children's narrow reading interests. One parent, for instance, told the investigator: "Art never reads anything except science fiction. How can I get him to read the classics that he needs for college?" Such parental pressure on the teacher can result in an English curriculum filled with classics as required reading while the varied interests and reading levels of the students are ignored. Adults think they know what would interest children, but the interest levels indicated by the publishers cannot be taken too seriously. Since interest levels, designed by the publishers, cover age spans of four years or more, the readabilities of these books also run the gamut, frequently being too difficult for young readers (Fry, 1975). One reason children do not consider reading as a major recreation is that the books labeled "high interest" by adults and book publishers are too difficult (Fry, 1975). Harris, in his survey of the literature, notes that Schnayer (1967) reported three main findings in his study of sixth grade pupils:

1. Interest in a selection may allow students of average ability to read and comprehend material that is above their measured reading level;
2. Low interest has a negative effect on comprehension;
3. The comprehension of high-ability students is less affected by interest than that of average of low-ability students (p. 522).

These are important findings because emphasis is shifted from the readability formula used, shifted from the teacher selection process, and shifted from instructional level/frustration level principles to the reader himself. The reader becomes the vital element in providing the correct "match"; the development of reader interest and motivation is paramount in providing reading experiences. Reading materials then must begin where the reader does: "imbedded in his comprehendable experience" (Duggins, 1975, p. 83). The primacy of the individual learner, the learner's choice of materials and methods, and the interaction of the learner, materials, and teacher are essential developments in the Fry Readability Principle. Poor readers, Duggins (1975) explains, are poor at the process of projecting themselves into the page and seem to need literature most like themselves. This is the reasoning behind the individualized learning and reading programs, such as the one administered by Cooke and Farrow (1975) at City University of New York. Believing that pre-designed packets of reading skills and drills are ineffective, calling them "fragmented" and "formulated," the authors rely heavily on self-interest in the selection of articles to present to their students. Interest, then, provides the motivation to read, and they are convinced that this method works.

The Readability Principle and Reading Performance

It is difficult for anyone to read without purpose. Students who read for specified reasons are much more likely to be thinking as they

read than if they read without awareness of purpose (Karlin, 1975). Who supplies this purpose is also a factor. Purpose and meaning would seem most effective in stimulating reading if they arise from the student himself. This motivation is the heart of the readability principle, for then can high readability be overcome. Users of readability formulae cannot divorce readability factors from the reader himself. In his synthesis and evaluation of 36 experimental studies of the effect of readability variables upon reader comprehension and retention, Klare (1976) places an emphasis on the validity of readability formulae, strongly denoting the reader as the crucial component.

Klare points out that, at best, readability is a "rubber concept" with comprehension as a "rubber criterion" since many of the aspects of readability are not clear-cut or agreed-upon terms. Because of this, he does not currently advocate a particular formula as he did in his 1963 Measurement of Readability, but he does indicate that the less time-consuming formulae are useful and applicable for classroom and reading instructors.

In his reading performance model (See Figure 1 on p. 14) Klare shows the major factors that emerged from his review of validity studies. One sees in the model the interacting factors affecting reader performance. It appears that whether or not a student reads depends upon the degree of interaction during the reading process. The researcher sees Klare's

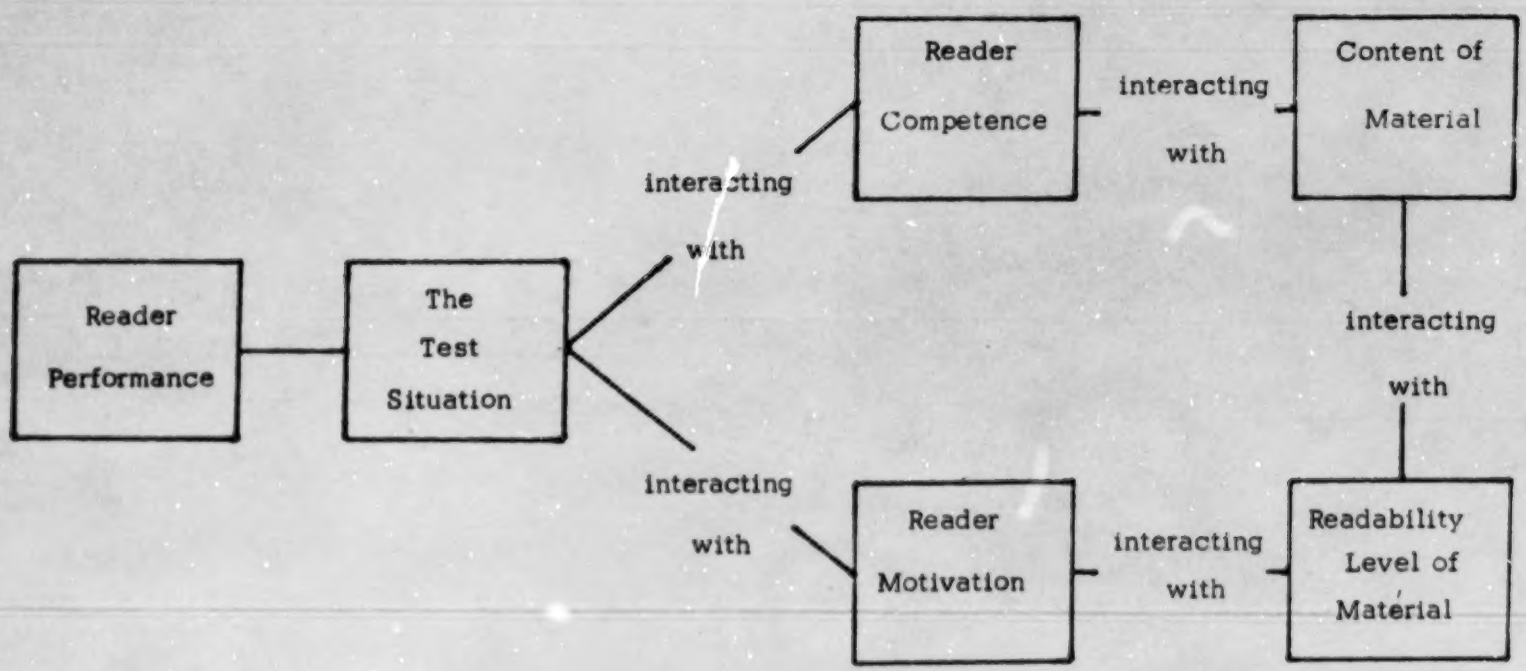

Figure 1. Klare's Model of Interacting Factors Influencing Reader Performance (Klare, 1976, p. 137)

model as applicable to the understanding of the present study--since reading level, reflected in Klare's model as "Reader Competence," and the readability score of the self-selected book are important interacting factors contributing to the experience of reading. While Klare's "Reader Performance" criteria may deviate from the researcher's, the interacting factors which contribute to the finished reading task are the same. This study, by examining the variables of reader competence, readability level of material, and reader motivation (interest), emphasizes the significance and the degree of interaction between these factors as students attempt to read and read more--without overt teacher intervention.

From the data Klare examined he concluded that "subjects appeared to compensate for the less readable presentation, IF they were highly enough motivated to do so, and IF the test situation permitted them to do so" (Klare, 1976, p. 139). This conclusion adds credence to the Fry Readability Principle that "high motivation overcomes high readability"--IF, according to Klare, the test situation permitted them to do so. The specifications of Klare's test situation were not disclosed, but variables such as liberal reading time, type of instruction, and the reinforcers used could affect the "reader performance" in a given test situation.

In another study, quoted by Klare, McLaughlin (1966) had easier and harder versions of a pamphlet that differed primarily in format,

length, and length of sentences. Through the presence or absence of some kind of threat, which was unspecified in the article, McLaughlin found that for subjects who were not highly motivated, the difference between comprehension scores on easier and harder versions was significant, favoring the easier version. "Readability," Klare interprets, "is relatively less important when motivation is high than when it is low" (Klare, 1976, p. 141). This does not mean, however, that readers prefer the less readable to the more readable material, even when highly motivated. Studies, he says, showed that the more readable is still preferred.

What are the implications for users of the readability formulae? Klare tells us:

> 1. Motivation can sometimes over-ride the effect of readability upon comprehension, at least where the motivation has a chance to operate. Raising motivation and keeping it high is of great importance, but it does not imply that increasing the level of motivation is easy or that it can be considered a simple substitute for improved readability.
>
> 2. The experimental situation may sometimes be artifical in respect to the level of motivation produced. The user of a readability formula might not have so high a level in his or her real-life situation, and ideally would want a typical level of motivation. A better test of the effect of readability might therefore come through field studies or unobtrusive measures (than through experimental testing), since motivation is likely to be more nearly typical (Klare, 1976, p. 140).

Motivation and interest are important, then, to the reading experience, if it takes place at all. Students in many remedial

courses may be still required to read materials which not only do not interest them, but do not appropriately match their reading levels. The second portion of the Fry Readability Principle states that "low motivation demands low readability." Beauchamp's study (1970) of disadvantaged ninth grade students, using an interview technique, found that there are a sufficient number of inexpensive hard cover and paperbound books that can interest an entire class of these youth. The problem is in deciding which books to use, especially when assuming the influence of the Fry Readability Principle. Beauchamp found that these students "do read books that ought to be 'too difficult' for them if these books have extremely high interest, books found to have themes of perseverance, physical strength, obstacles, detective stories" (p. 158). The author found that teachers tend to be reluctant to ask for students' interests and use these choices as a basis for individualized reading instruction in the belief that the school's curriculum dictates the reading of certain books. The readability of the books, the reading levels of the students, or the reader's interests in the subject matter in such required readings are not considered. The question arises: Do children actually read books they take from library shelves? In her doctoral dissertation, Marion W. Fox (1953) tried to answer this question by investigating the free-choice reading selections of 532 seventh and eighth grade pupils in the Atlantic City Junior High School. The six-year study which included 6,881 chosen books

indicated that while most of the students preferred fiction to non-fiction, they also read at several levels of book difficulty. Only 7 of the 532 pupils did all their reading at a level below seventh grade.

While these findings show that self-selected reading materials accommodate the reader's interest and motivation, Fox's method of determining book difficulty does not suit the purposes of this present study. Her classification of difficulty was derived from the Children's Catalog or the Standard Catalog for High Schools. Books were described as being "suitable" for grades 1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, etc. All books recommended for grades no higher than the sixth were included under one category in the Fox study, grades 1-8 under a second, and grades 9 and above under a third. She admits that her review of the literature indicated such grading of difficulty was unsatisfactory and misleading at times. Such levels are "relative" and any title not found in the two sources quoted above were examined by the school or city librarian. Fox's data does, however, show that book difficulty was not the deciding factor in its being selected for reading: interest in the subject matter was. Yet, book difficulty does not have to be a deciding factor but one of several factors which may influence a child's decision to read a particular book. Sometimes it is the only factor which inhibits reading. Fox's inattention to readability weakens her study; it is not sufficient to look at readability in large "grade chunks."

An investigation of the relationship between reading levels of students and the reading levels of materials for which they show a preference was performed by Zelnick (1968). In looking at the reading interests of high school dropouts enrolled in a special program at the Kilmer Job Corps Center, Zelnick concluded that students with lower reading levels will respond favorable to materials which might ordinarily be considered too difficult for them. "It appears that when Corpsmen are interested, they will overcome handicaps in reading when dealing with certain materials" (p. 8 6).

Reading Selections/Human Judgments: A Summary

Readability is a highly utilized method for matching student's reading level with an appropriate book. The method for calculating readability is a decision publishers and reading teachers largely make. Research has shown that the simpler formulae compare favorably and would be a wiser choice (Vaughan, 1976). As Klare points out, "Formula scores are, at best, first approximations to difficulty for readers, and human judgments are needed along with the scores" (Klare, 1976, p. 146). Klare's conclusions stress that where a reader's background information is high, readability becomes less critical, and were interest-value in a particular subject is high, a readability formula may over-estimate comprehension difficulty. Because of

these considerations, studies which show the complex relationships between the incidence of reading and readability need the added variable of high interest/low interest motivation.

Little research has been done to indicate the extent to which students will read if the match between readability and reading level is favorable under conditions of pupils' high interest/motivation. The Fry Readability Principle appears to be operating, but the present study assists in clarifying how and to what extent it works. In looking at readability, perhaps the teacher's judgment is not as valid as the student's choice of reading material. This does not mean that our readability aids should not be used, for "the determination and awareness of readability is a professional tool that should be in every teacher's bag of knowledge" (Fry, 1975, p. 851).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

In order to test the hypotheses of this study concerning the effect of interest on the amount of material read and the effect of readability match on the amount read, the following procedures were instigated: When students returned books to the library, the investigator first asked the student, "Did you choose this book yourself for personal reading or was it assigned reading from your classes?" If the student indicated that he himself chose the book for personal reading, then the researcher asked the student to take a short interest inventory and to indicate how many pages he had read out of the total number of pages in the book. After the interview, the researcher checked the student's reading comprehension score on a standardized test (the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills) and, after checking out the book the student had returned to the library, calculated a readability score on the book using the Fry Readability Formula.

Population of Subjects

Fifty-eight secondary school students, who attended Freehold Township High School, were interviewed for this study. The students live

in an area which has grown enormously in the last ten years, many coming from urban areas seeking a slower-paced and tranquil setting. Most of Freehold Township's 1400 high school students live in community developments erected in the last eight to ten years, homes generally valued at over $50,000. Approximately 150 students come from a rural sending district outside Freehold Township.

According to the 1970 census, Freehold Township's 13,000 residents are predominantly white and pursue professional and technical careers. The population has grown now to approximately 18,000 and the trend is still toward the same racial and professional lines. This area, still vastly growing, is experiencing a 175.5% population growth (as determined by figures from 1960 to 1970). At that time (1970) 42.7% of Freehold Township's households earned above $15,000 (median income, $13,907). Today, Freehold Township's population is considered typical of a suburban, affluent white community (with a scattering of minorities).

Time Sampling

Students were chosen as they returned books to the library and as they indicated that they had chosen their books for personal reading (without teacher intervention or assignment). To avoid sampling students from only one track (vocational or college preparatory), a flexible

time schedule was adopted. Arrangements were made to adhere to the following schedule, one which permitted sampling of the total population when the library was most utilized by all students:

Monday, Friday	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:15--8:35	10:30--11:30
12:30--1:00	9:15--9:30
3:10--3:30	3:10--3:30

Since the writer was interested in each instance of self-selected material, some students were questioned two or three times. The interviews took place largely between January 3 through April 30, 1978.

Data Collection Procedures

When students returned books to the library, the investigator asked the student, "Did you choose this book for personal reading purposes?" If the student responded that the book was required reading for one of his classes, then that student was not interviewed. Students who indicated that they chose their own books for personal reading purposes were included in the study; students chose books without overt teacher invention in all cases. A few students indicated that they were doing "extra credit" reading, but they had chosen their own books for this purpose.

Before data collection could begin, the researcher had to devise an instrument which could express a belief or feeling about interest in

one's reading selection and experience, and at the same time the instrument would also be used to record the amount of material completed in each instance of free-choice materials. The devised measure to indicate interest and amount of reading was a 5-point scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Interested	Slightly	Interested	Very	Highly Interested

After the students indicated their level of interest in the amount, the students responded to one of two statements:

_____I did finish reading this book. I read a total of _____pages out of _____pages in this book.

_____I did not finish reading this book, but I did read a total of _____pages out of _____pages in the book.

Selection of a Test: Readability

After the data were collected, the Fry Readability Formula was applied to the books freely chosen by the students. The Fry Readability Formula was chosen because of the relative ease in determining the syllabic count and number of sentences per 100-word sample. It also compares favorably with other, more tedious, formulae, such as the Dale-Chall and Spache (Vaughan, 1976).

Samples within each book, returned by the student to the library, whether the book was completed or not, were taken by dividing the book into fifths since five samples were to be taken. Each sample was taken exactly on the fifth unless the 100 words could not be had on

the page. When this occurred, the previous page was used. The investigator was also mindful of a too consistent sampling of introductory paragraphs, exclusively descriptive or concluding paragraphs, or sampling merely dialogue. Five 100-word samples were selected rather than the recommended three in order to secure representative readability. Specific procedures for calculating the readability score appear below:

1. Passages of 100 words each were counted for each of the five passages.
2. The total number of syllables in each passage was counted.
3. The total number of sentences (to the nearest tenth) was counted for each passage.
4. The average number of sentences and the average number of syllables were computed for all five passages.
5. These mean scores were then plotted on the Fry Readability Graph to obtain a grade level designation.

Selection of a Test: Reading Level

The California series of Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) is a district-wide test administered to all 9-11 grade students enrolled in Freehold Township High School. The ten-part comprehensive test, Level 4, Form S, provides a variety of measures, one of which is the reading level of the individual. (Also given is the California Short Form Test of Mental Maturity.)

The standardization of the CTBS/S is drawn from public and Catholic schools within 50 states, comprising approximately 150,000 students in grades K-12. In April, 1973, approximately one-fifth of the sample, at levels 1-4, were tested; a multi-stage, stratified random sampling with proportional allocation was applied.

The Buros reviewers indicated the grade equivalents, extending to 11-13, weakens the comprehensive tests, especially in view of the "well-known weaknesses of grade equivalents, it is difficult to understand why they are included" (Buros' Seventh Edition, p. 20). Yet, a particular strength of the CTBS/S is content validity in that classroom teachers and curriculum specialists were used in writing the original items.

Test administration of the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills and the CSFTMM took place in May, 1977, and these results were reported on school records. The same testing program is employed throughout grades K-12 in the Freehold Township area; therefore, there was no problem in obtaining reading level scores.

Statistical Design

The statistical test utilized for the hypotheses, presented in Chapter I, is a parametric one: the t test. This test was applied to the data for hypothesis 1 (difference in mean scores of the number

of pages read and percent of book read between high and low interest groups), hypothesis 3 (difference between interest scores of students who have negative matches and students who have positive matches), hypothesis 4 (in positive matches, the difference in the mean number of pages read and percent of book read than when negative matches occur), hypothesis 5 (in negative matches, the difference between the mean number of pages and percent of book read by high interest and low interest groups), and hypothesis 6 (in positive matches, the difference between mean number of pages read and percent of book read by high interest and low interest students). The mean scores of interest levels, percent of pages or book read in relation to positive or negative matches were computed. The comparative data are shown in the tables in the following chapter.

For hypothesis 2 the Pearson Product/Moment Correlation was used, showing the relationship between readability scores of the self-selected books and students' scores on the California CTBS (reading comprehension section).

Summary

For this study, the following data were collected from the instruments used: (1) the number of pages read; total number of pages in the book selected; (2) the readability score of the selected book; (3) interest levels self reported by the student after the reading

took place: and (4) the reading level of the student as determined by the CTBS (a standardized test score).

A pilot study, using the researcher's instrument for interest, was done in the month of October, 1977. Five students at that time were interviewed, and from this trial run, a revision was made in the interest instrument. The interest inventory was much too long and would not suit the purposes of this study; changes were made to remedy this. Early indications also showed that the readability of the self-selected books and reading levels of the students varied greatly, giving greater focus to the issue of interest and motivation. The distinction between a positive match and a negative match became crucial during the trial run, and adjustments were made in determining the match criteria.

This data-collection procedure and instruments were utilized in interviews with students, 58 of them, in 75 instances of free choice reading experiences from January 3 through April 30, 1978, and the appropriate statistical analyses were then performed. These findings are reported in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A discussion of the findings of this study must involve a carefully worded emphasis upon instances of self-selected books by high school students (grades 9-12) as contrasted with the number of students themseleves. There were 58 students in the study who read or attempted to read 75 free-choice books. Readability of these books varied from 3.0 (on the Fry Readability Scale) to 13.0, and the reading levels of the students varied from 3.3 to 13.6 (the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills).

Presentation of Data

To determine the extent to which interest (or motivation) affected the amount read, it was hypothesized that:

H_1 Students with high interest as indicated by a self-reporting interest inventory will have statistically significant higher mean scores of the number of pages read and percent of book read than students with low interest.

Taking all instances of the freely chosen books and dividing them into the high interest and low interest groupings was the first task. Students who reported "highly interested" or "very interested" in the

books selected were categorized as the high interest group; these designations appear as numbers 4 and 5 on the researcher-designed 5-point scale for interest measurement. Those students who reported "not interested" or "slightly interested" (numbers 1 and 2 on the scale) were placed in the low-interest group. These two groups total 70 instances out of 75 instances in the study. The five students, out of the 75 total, who reported "interested" (number 3 on the interest scale) were discarded as the middle group.

It is clear from Table 1 that the first hypothesis can be supported at the .001 significance level when a t test was applied. Students who

TABLE 1

MEAN NO. OF PAGES READ AND MEAN PERCENT OF BOOK READ FOR HIGH AND LOW INTERESTED STUDENTS IN ALL INSTANCES

	N Instances	Mean Interest Score	Mean No. of Pages	Mean % of Book
High Interest Group	54	4.4	247.48	97
Low Interest Group	16	1.6	67.06	27
Diff		2.8	180.42*	71

*t = 6.15, p = .001

were greatly interested in books read more than students with low interest, with a difference between the means of 180.42 pages. The high-interest group (54 instances) read a mean of 97% of the book chosen while the low-interest group read a mean of 26% of the book (16 instances), with a difference between the means of 71%.

The question, "Do students choose books at their own reading levels?", was hypothesized in the following manner:

H_2 There will be a positive correlation between readability of books selected and students' scores on the California Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

Using all 75 instances of students' freely chosen books and the students' reading levels on the CTBS, the Pearson/Product-Moment Correlation was .04, which indicates that there was no relationship between the two variables in this sample; therefore, the second hypothesis was not supported by the data.

When students do choose books which are positively matched to their reading levels, are their interest scores higher than those students who are negatively matched? The third hypothesis states:

H_3 There will be a statistically significant difference between interest scores of students who have a negative match in reading level and readability and students who have a positive match.

Table 2 reports the findings which indicate that the third hypothesis cannot be supported due to lack of statistical significance between the mean interest scores of the positively matched students (who completed books), N = 32, and the negatively matched students (who completed their books), N = 24.

TABLE 2

MEAN INTEREST SCORES FOR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE MATCHES OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THEIR BOOKS

	N Instances	Mean Interest Score
Positive Group	32	4.30
Negative Group	24	4.29

It was also hypothesized that:

H_4 When positive matches do occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference in the mean number of pages read and the percent of book read than when negative matches occur.

Again, looking at all instances of book selections by students, without the interest variable, it is found that the difference between the mean number of pages read is not statistically significant at the .01 level when a t test is applied; however, it is significant at the .10 level. The positively matched students read a mean of 218.30 pages

while the negatively matched students read 196.65, a mean difference of 21.65 (See Table 3 below).

TABLE 3

MEAN NO. OF PAGES READ AND MEAN PERCENT OF BOOK READ FOR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE MATCHES IN ALL INSTANCES AND IN CASES OF BOOK COMPLETION

	N Instances	Mean No. of Pages	Mean % of Book	N Students	Comp. Books	Mean No. of Pages
Positive Group	43	218.30	83	30	32	266.70
Negative Group	32	196.65	81	19	24	313.42
Diff		21.65*	2		8	49.69**

*t = 1.42, p = .10

**t = 1.26, p = .10

The data in table above do show that 30 students completed 32 books (a mean of 1.06 books) while the negatively matched students (19) completed 24 books (a mean of 1.26 books), a difference of eight books. The data show that the positively matched students read more books, but the negatively matched students read more pages. This was found statistically significant at the .10 level. While the positively matched students read more total books, the negatively matched students show a mean number of books which is slightly larger (1.26 books). However, a median score of these two groups reveals that the positively matched students chose books which contained 249.5

pages, with the negatively matched students choosing 196-page books, a median difference of 53.5 pages. While positively matched students read longer books and more pages in all instances, when the t test was applied, the difference between the means was not found to be significant at the acceptable .01 level, but it did reach significance at the .10 level.

The mean readability of the books chosen by the students in all instances was 7.3 and the mean reading level of all students in all instances was 8.1, but in looking only at the mean readability of the books chosen by the positively matched students, it was found that those students chose books almost four grade levels below the mean reading level. The table below (Table 4) illustrates this fact. The negatively matched students chose books with a mean readability of 7.9 while their mean reading level was 5.6.

TABLE 4

MEAN READABILITY SCORES AND MEAN READING LEVELS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE GROUPS IN ALL INSTANCES OF BOOK SELECTIONS

	N Instances	Mean Readability	Mean Reading Level	Diff
Positive Group	43	6.7	10.6	-3.9
Negative Group	32	7.9	5.6	2.3
Diff		-1.2	5.0	

To what extent does interest affect the amount of material read? In comparing both positive and negative matches, hypothesis 5 states:

H_5 When negative matches do occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference between the mean number of pages and percent of book read by high interest students and the mean number of pages read and percent of book read by low interest students.

Table 5 below includes all instances of negatively matched students. All those who had indicated the number 3 on the interest inventory ("interested") were discarded as the middle group; thus, the table shows only the high and low interest groups. The difference between the means was found to be statistically significant at the .005 level. However, the sample sizes (24 and 5) were small so that not as much confidence can be placed in this test of significance. The data clearly show that there was a difference in the mean number of pages

TABLE 5

MEAN PERCENT OF PAGES READ AND MEAN PERCENT OF BOOK COMPLETED BY HIGH AND LOW INTEREST STUDENTS IN NEGATIVE MATCHES

	N Instances	Mean No. of Pages	Mean % of Book	Mean Interest
High Interest	24	238.8	95	4.4
Low Interest	5	20.8	7	1.0
Diff		218.0*	88	

*t = 3.21, p = .005

read and a high percentage of the book completed by the highly interested group as contrasted with the low-interest group. Only 7% of the book was completed by the low-interest group.

Hypothesis 6 dealt with the positively matched students:

H_6 When positive matches occur between reading level and readability, there will be a statistically significant difference between mean number of pages read and percent of book read by high-interest students and mean number of pages read and percent of book read by low-interest students.

In Table 6 below those positively matched students who were highly interested in their free-choice books (those indicating the numbers 4 and 5 on the interest inventory scale) read more than the low-interest group.

TABLE 6

MEAN PERCENT OF PAGES READ AND MEAN PERCENT OF BOOK COMPLETED BY HIGH AND LOW INTEREST STUDENTS IN POSITIVE MATCHES

	N Instances	Mean No. of Pages	Mean % of Book	Mean Interest
High Interest	30	254.4	98	4.4
Low Interest	10	85.5	12	1.7
Diff		168.9*	86	

*t = 5.92, p = .01

The data reveal that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean number of pages read by high-interest students in positive matches and the mean number of pages read by low-interest students in positive matches. The high-interest group read a mean of 254.4 pages while the low-interest group read 85.5 pages, a mean difference of 168.9 pages and an 86% difference in percent of book completed. (See Table 6, p. 36.)

Discussion

In the study 58 students attempted to read 75 freely chosen books. Sixteen of these students chose to read more than one book and completed 24 out of an attempted 33, the total of 49 students completing 56 books--which means 84% of the students choosing books of their choice completed their reading.

The data show the variations that exist as interest, readability, and tested reading levels contribute to the process of choosing a book and reading it. Interest does seem to affect the amount of material a student will read. Students scoring high on the interest inventory read more pages than those scoring low--without any consideration of readability or reading level of the book or student. Taking book characteristics of readability and students' reading levels into account, students do not appear to choose books suited to their reading level.

Despite these findings, not revealed in the statistical analyses are a couple of instances which help to illustrate the importance of interest. Of the 16 students in a total sample of 49 who completed books and read more than one, five chose books which were positively and negatively matched to their reading levels. Two specific cases prove interesting when interest and book completion are considered:

	Interest score	Positive + Negative -	# of pages	Total of book pages	% of book
Case A					
Book 1	1	+	100	305	33
Book 2	5	-	221	221	100
Case B					
Book 1	4	+	110	110	100
Book 2	2	-	14	160	8

In Case A the student did not complete the book although it was suited to his reading level, while he preferred completing a book more difficult for him. In Case B the opposite occurs; the student did not finish the negatively matched book, but she did choose to complete the one suited to her level. Students appear to be guided by interest or other criteria rather than difficulty of the book. Very few of the books chosen were pictorial or illustrated to any extent. While a strictly pictorial book was ruled out in the researcher's design/purpose,

the books included in the study were not limited to novels. It appears that the paperbacks and fiction works were most popular among these students.

Looking at the interest scores in relation to negative/positive matches, students in both groups had nearly identical mean interest scores. The difficulty (readability--reading level matches and mismatches) did not affect those who completed books; their interest remained high.

In eliminating consideration of the interest variable, it is true that the positively matched students tended to read more pages in all 75 instances. This was statistically significant at the .10 level, not the more desirable .01 level. Until the median was determined, the negative students appeared to read more pages and books per student than the positively matched students. The negatively matched students, then, were highly interested and did complete their books, with these students choosing shorter books, in general, than the positive group. However, in individual cases, each group had 3 students who chose 400 to 600-page books. (The smallest book chosen in the positive group was a 110-page novel; the negative group, a 136-page book.)

Since the second hypothesis was not supported by the data and a slight or no relationship exists between reading level and book

readability, it does not appear that students' perception of book difficulty interferes with the amount of book read--but interest does. In the negative matches, for instance, high-interest students completed 95% of the book chosen while the low-interest group completed only 7%. Even in the positive cases, 98% of the book was completed by high interest students--while the low-interest group completed 12%. Interest, not difficulty, is the critical variable in self-selected books.

This is not a surprising phenomenon since readability formulae have not purported to estimate interest. Harris reported that concept load and interest will affect "difficulty" of material and, consequently, the reading choices of students. Readability is an important factor for the teacher to consider in planning instructional programs for students, but, from the data in the study, readability does not seem to concern the student. While Schnayer (1967), cited by Harris, reported that interest in reading selections may allow students to read and comprehend material, which was measured above their reading level, he was primarily interested in the students' comprehension of such materials. This research did not study the comprehension variable since the measurement of comprehension could not feasibly be incorporated into the study's design.

The relationship between reading and motivation to read, often defined as "interest," is assumed to be a positive one, and the results of this study confirm that when high interest occurs, students

do read more. The data show that highly interested students, who chose books higher than their reading levels, read 95% of the reading material while the low-interest group, with high readability books, read only 7% of the reading material (See Table 5). Therefore, the readability principle is confirmed, but the latter part of the statement, "low motivation demands low readability," is of interest to the teacher only in the assignment of required reading, for the data here show that when interest is not present or slight, little or no reading takes place--even if materials are freely chosen from the onset. The pressures of grades, teacher or parent disapproval, and other factors may add the necessary motivation for students to finish reading selections, but a dislike of reading is likely to result.

Klare's model (1963) of reader performance in a test situation shows these variables as they combine to produce the end result--reading. Readability, in the model shown in page 14, is one element out of four which interact in the reading process. This study underscores the importance of reader motivation as it relates and interacts with reader competence, content of material, and readability. Klare commented that "subjects appeared to compensate for the less readable presentation, IF they were highly enough motivated to do so, and IF the test situation permitted them to do so" (Klare, 1976, p. 139). While this study's test situation was the student's selection and

and completion of a book, rather than the reading performance test situation in Klare's discussion, his comment is applicable here. If the motivation has been provided (interest from student), then reading does take place, and the student will "compensate" for other "less readable" elements, namely, difficulty of material. Readability, Klare further points out, is "relatively less important when motivation is high than when it is low." Beauchamp, too, disclosed in his 1970 study that disadvantaged ninth grade students did read material which was "too difficult" for them because of their high interest in the books.

The study presented here looked at a sample of 58 students in their selection of 75 books. Forty-nine of these students completed at least one book. Those who indicated high interest in their selections read a higher number of pages and more books than did those who were not interested in the books. This finding was not surprising, but the data showed no correlation between reading levels of students and readability of those self-selected books--a finding which was unexpected, but in view of the interest level of the students, it should not have been. Students chose books which primarily interested them--not because of reading difficulty. The study did not look at the variety of reading materials among students or reading tastes. Perhaps a poor reader would consistently choose books in a certain interest area while others might choose from a number of novels, reading indiscriminately and widely.

Another unexpected result was the similar mean interest levels of the positive match group and the negative match group. These students completed their books, and it should have been no surprise that interest levels from both groups, regardless of book difficulty or reading level, were high. Why? It could be surmised that students who complete their books are interested in them. This also means, of course, that the high-readability/high-interest sample may be a reflection of the middle class, suburban community.

The negative matches also read only a mean difference of 21.65 pages fewer than positive matches in all 75 instances of book selection. When the 49 students who completed their books are extracted from the 75, the 19 in the negative group appeared to read 47 more pages and books than the positive group. The median score, however, showed that the negative group read shorter books than did the positive group. This illustrates the problem of measurement of material read since one has to be mindful of typography, layout, and design of printed materials. What would be a better measurement? Words, paragraphs, sentences, fine print or large print, page size are all legitimate measurement indicators, perhaps more accurate than pages and percent of book read. In addition, time spent on each book may be another factor which could necessitate review and analysis of this study.

Also shown in this work is the importance of interest in both negative and positive ma ches. The result (Tables 5 and 6), showing that more material is read among high-interest groups regardless of reading level/readability match, is one that reinforces the readability principle which is the focal point of the study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The intent and purpose of this study began with a growing concern of the classroom teacher in getting poorly motivated students to read and to read more. The burden of obtaining reading materials suitable for poor readers rests with the teacher. Readability formulae are the tools used for this purpose; the problem of matching the suitable material with the child's reading level has been viewed narrowly, and somehow the instructional purposes of the teacher become paramount, and the student's perceived needs and interests are secondary. This study, then, set out to analyze the feasibility of utilizing the reader more--letting him decide what's best for his reading needs--without teacher direction or intervention. Does the reader himself hold the key for matching reading level and readability as he selects his own books? The Fry Readability Principle--"high motivation overcomes high readability level, but low motivation demands a low readability level"--became a nucleus around which the study revolved.

The study involved 58 students choosing 75 books; 49 of these students completed 56 books. Students were asked, at the conclusion of their reading or attempted reading, their interest in the book on a 1 to 5 scale (1 = not interested, 5 = highly interested).

Conclusions

This study found that interest was a strong factor in getting students to read books regardless of readability of books; both positive and negative students showed that high interest led to more reading.

Students did not choose books at their own reading level, since the correlation between readability and reading level was .04.

The study also found that there were no differences in interest between the positive-match group and the negative-match group. The mean readability of the positive group was 6.7 and the mean reading level was 10.6, indicating that positive-match students read easier books than did the negative-match students. The negative-match students read books that were generally 2.3 grade levels higher than their mean reading level (5.6).

Positive-match students, however, did read more than the negative-match students; here readability tends to predict the amount of material read.

Suggestions for Further Research

(1) Determining more precisely the aspects of motivation and a definition for the term which can be more easily measured. Studies presently use motivation to mean a number of human initiators, but student interest and student motivation are terms used almost interchangeably. Perhaps, then, a more accurate measurement can be designed.

(2) Socio-economic status among negatively matched students vs. positively matched students would provide additional clues to the problems related to reading and reading frequency.

(3) There is a definite need to vary the sampling of student population; a group of disadvantaged students or an urban school population may give verifying or varying results.

(4) The use of another reading level measurement other than the CTBS which has a ceiling of 13.6, thereby leaving some question as to its reliability.

(5) Perhaps more of a heterogenous sampling and a larger sampling would yield data validating the conclusions presented here; an elementary school population would also be helpful.

(6) A look at typography, design and layout of text, words, sentences, paragraphs, or other measurement criterion might provide the accuracy needed to confirm or invalidate the conclusions reported with regard to positive vs. negative matches in relation to amount read.

(7) Adding the variable of comprehension would add strength to the validity of the readability principle.

(8) A local library setting, rather than a school setting, may yield interesting data, considering the motivational aspects of a student's choosing a local library over the convenience of his school library for leisure reading purposes.

(9) Time spent reading each book freely chosen is also a variable which would add clarification to the issue presented in this study.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A OF POSITIVE-MATCH STUDENTS WITH INTEREST SCORES, BOOK SELECTIONS, PAGES READ, PERCENT OF BOOK READ, STUDENT READING LEVEL, AND READABILITY OF BOOK

TABLE A

POSITIVE-MATCH STUDENTS WITH INTEREST SCORES, BOOK SELECTIONS, PAGES READ, PERCENT OF BOOK READ, STUDENT READING LEVEL, AND READABILITY OF BOOK

(N = 43 Instances)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Pat	5	Go Ask Alice	188	100	7.5	7.0
Lauren	5	The Deep	291	100	8.7	7.0
Sherry	5	Day No Pigs Would Die	139	100	9.7	3.0
Maureen	5	Amityville Horror	201	100	10.4	10.0
Joe	5	Odessa File	334	100	11.7	8.0
Debbie	5	Eric	267	100	10.2	7.0
Cheryl	5	The Slave	254	100	13.6	7.0
Pat	5	Ordinary People	245	100	13.6	3.0
Richard	5	Coma	308	100	11.2	10.0

(continued)

TABLE A (continued)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Kim	5	Exorcist	403	100	9.4	4.0
Charles	5	Malko I	180	100	7.6	6.0
Kristin	5	That Was Then This is Now	154	100	13.6	7.6
Shelly	5	Girls of Huntington House	213	100	5.8	5.0
Richard	4	The Deep	291	100	8.1	7.0
Twila	4	One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest	272	100	13.6	7.0
Richard	4	Close Encounters	256	100	11.2	9.0
Kathy	4	House on Mt. Vernon St.	175	100	9.8	6.0
Jack	4	Bridge at To-Ko Ri	80/125	64	8.3	8.0
Abby	4	The Chosen	271	100	13.6	7.0
Kathy	4	The Other	288	100	8.7	6.0

(continued)

TABLE A (continued)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Livia	4	The Moonstone	415	100	13.6	8.0
David	4	Homeward/Beyond	242	100	13.6	7.0
Aileen	4	Curtain	280	100	13.6	4.0
Chris	4	Ball Four	354	100	10.4	3.4
Herb	4	Specimens	224	100	10.8	7.0
Terry	4	Harvest Home	415	100	13.6	7.0
Lee	4	Ski Bum	188	100	10.9	4.0
Annette	4	Mr./Mrs. BoJo Jones	189	100	6.2	6.0
Dan	4	Recalled to Life	144	100	9.8	9.0
Stuart	4	The Temple	371	100	6.4	5.0
Matt	3	Helter Skelter	200/664	30	13.6	9.0
Lisa	3	The Shining	100/447	22	13.6	7.0

(continued)

TABLE A (continued)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Craig	3	The Clocks	100/246	41	10.7	7.0
Kathy	3	Blueberry Summer	188	100	9.8	5.0
Marie	3	The Ghost Next Door	152	100	8.7	6.0
Julie	3	The Green Girl	110	100	7.0	5.0
Gary	2	Mountain Man	100/305	33	8.3	7.0
Dorrie	2	Sound/Fury	20/427	5	13.6	7.0
Jack	2	McQuaid	25/246	10	8.3	6.0
Richard	2	Run Shelley Run	100/157	64	9.8	6.0
Art	1	Walden	70/221	32	13.6	9.0
Dan	1	Loneliness/Long Distance Runner	40/144	28	9.8	7.0
Kristin	1	Close Encounters	100/256	39	13.6	9.0

APPENDIX B

TABLE B OF NEGATIVE-MATCH STUDENTS WITH INTEREST SCORES, BOOK SELECTIONS, PAGES READ, PERCENT OF BOOK READ, STUDENT READING LEVEL, AND READABILITY OF BOOK

TABLE B

NEGATIVE-MATCH STUDENTS WITH INTEREST SCORES, BOOK SELECTIONS, PAGES READ, PERCENT OF BOOK READ, STUDENT READING LEVEL, AND READABILITY OF BOOK

(N = 32 Instances)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Noreen	5	The Omen	202	100	4.2	9.0
Nancy	5	The Other Side Midnight	462	100	5.5	7.0
Kathy	5	Amityville Horror	201	100	8.8	10.0
Beau	5	Conan of Aquilonia	171	100	5.2	7.0
Ellen	5	Run Shelley Run	157	100	4.5	6.0
Pat	5	Amityville Horror	201	100	7.5	10.0
Mike	5	Close Encounters	256	100	4.5	9.0
Willie	5	The Contender	136	100	3.3	4.0
Bob	5	Run Shelley Run	157	100	5.7	6.0
Brad	4	A Separate Peace	186	100	5.9	7.0

(continued)

TABLE B (continued)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Gary	4	Born Free	221	100	8.3	9.0
Kevin	4	The Titans	663	100	7.6	8.0
Stuart	4	Serpico	313	100	6.4	10.0
Cindy	4	Serpico	50/313	16	5.3	10.0
Sara	4	Death Be Not Proud	161	100	5.3	9.0
Carol	4	Helter Skelter	664	100	7.7	9.0
Reenie	4	I Am Rosemarie	225	100	5.0	7.0
Shelly	4	Run Shelley Run	157	100	5.8	6.0
Sara	4	Go Ask Alice	188	100	5.3	7.0
Jackie	4	Close Encounters	256	100	6.5	9.0
Beau	4	Conan: The Buchaneer	191	100	5.2	7.0
Bob	4	The Chocolate War	253	100	5.7	7.0

(continued)

TABLE B (continued)

Student	Interest level	Book selection	No. of pages read/total	% of book completed	CTBS score	Fry Readability
Lucky	4	Run Shelley Run	100/157	64	4.1	6.0
Roxanne	4	Hold the Rein Free	191	100	5.0	6.0
Ellen	3	Mr./Mrs. BoJo Jones	189	100	4.5	6.0
Nancy	3	That Was Then/This Is Now	154	100	5.5	6.0
Paul	2	Railroads	114/140	81	4.2	13.0
Melody	2	I Never Promised Rose Gar.	40/300	13	5.8	9.0
Bob	2	The Khaki Mafia	20/351	6	5.7	8.0
Paul	1	American Heritage in Railroads	10/312	3	4.2	11.0
Julie	1	Back Home	14/160	9	7.0	8.0
Robert	1	The Khaki Mafia	10/351	3	7.0	8.0

APPENDIX C

INTEREST INVENTORY SCALE/INTERVIEW FORM

INTEREST INVENTORY SCALE

Name_____ Grade 9 10 11 12 Age____HR____

Book Title_____ Author_____ #_____

_____I did finish reading this book; I read _____pages out of _____.

_____I did not finish reading this book, but I did read _____pages out of _____.

Circle the number which best describes your level of interest in reading this particular book:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Interested	Slightly	Interested	Very	Highly Interested

Additional Comments:

RESEARCHER'S NOTES

Readability Samples

_____

Page	Syllables	Sent.
____	_____	____
____	_____	____
____	_____	____
____	_____	____
____	_____	____

Reading level____ (RL)

Fry Readability____

Diff ____

Positive ____

Negative ____